

Claims

1. A system for updating at least one database containing at least one address for a recipient of an electronic message to be sent from a Sponsor to the recipient, comprising:

at least one database containing a listing of at least one address associated with a recipient;

5 a clearing house containing a listing of an old address and a new address for at least one recipient; and

a communications link for transferring data between the database and the clearing house;

whereupon receiving a request from the at least one database for an updated address for a recipient, the clearing house is queried for an identification of addresses that match the request from the at least one database to the clearing house, and based upon a result of the query to the clearing house, the clearing house matches those addresses that have changed with those requested by the at least one database and communicates such matches to the at least one database; whereupon receipt of a record containing an updated address the at least one database updates its address list.

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2. The system of claim 1, wherein the at least one database is accessed by a Sponsor in order to communicate a message from the Sponsor to at least one recipient.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the clearing house is provided on a Network Server by an online information provider.

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4. The system of claim 3, wherein the Network Server registers at least one recipient with an electronic change of address service provided by the online information provider.

5. The system of claim 3, wherein the Network Server may be accessed from more than one online site by a recipient desiring to update at least one address associated with the recipient.

6. The system of claim 5, wherein the recipient provides to the Network Server at least one old address and at least one new address.

7. A system for updating a database containing at least one address for a recipient of an electronic message to be sent from a Sponsor to the recipient, comprising:

at least one Sponsor database containing a listing of at least one address associated with a recipient;

5 a Network Server containing listing of an old address and a new address for at least one recipient; and

a reconnection manager connected to the at least one Sponsor database and the Network Server;

whereupon receiving a request from the at least one Sponsor database for a new address for a

10 recipient, the reconnection manager queries the Network Server for an identification of addresses which have changed since a last request by the reconnection manager to the Network Server; based upon a result of the query to the Network Server, the reconnection manager matches those addresses that have changed with those requested by the at least one Sponsor database and communicates such matches to the Network Server; whereupon receipt

15 of those matches, the Network Server communicates to the reconnection manager an updated address list for those recipients permitting the Network Server to update the at least one Sponsor database; whereupon receipt of a record containing an updated address, the reconnection manager updates the at least one Sponsor database with the new addresses for each recipient permitting the Network Server to provide a new address.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein the Network Server may be accessed from more than one online site by a recipient desiring to update at least one address associated with the recipient.

9. The system of claim 7, further comprising at least one web site provided by a Sponsor via which a recipient registers an old address and a new address with the Network Server.

10. A process that utilizes a clearing house to update a listing of addresses utilized by a Sponsor to send an electronic message to at least one recipient, comprising:
receiving from a Sponsor an electronic message containing at least one request for an updated address for a recipient associated with an old address;

5 receiving a listing of recipients with new addresses which have been updated from a clearing house;

matching the request for an updated address against the listing of recipients with new addresses;

10 communicating to the clearing house those recipients identified by a result of the matching;

obtaining approvals from each recipient identified by the result of the

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matching to provide the new address to the Sponsor;

communicating each new address approved by each recipient to the Sponsor;

and

15 updating a listing of recipient addresses for the Sponsor.

11. The process of claim 10, wherein the electronic message further comprises one received via at least one mailbox selected from the group consisting of: an e-mail mailbox, a voice message mailbox, a pager mailbox, an instant message mailbox, a mobile telephone message mailbox, and a cable message mailbox.

12. A system for updating at least one address associated with a recipient for receiving an electronic message, comprising:

a database containing a listing of at least one address associated with a recipient for receiving an electronic message; and

5 a clearing house for receiving and processing a query for a new address associated with an old address for the recipient;

wherein the clearing house contains a listing of an old address and an associated new address for the recipient; and whereupon receiving the query, the clearing house compares the old address identified in the query with at least one old address provided in the listing and

10 communicates a result of the identification to the database; the result providing, for at least one address matched during the comparison, an identification of a new address associated with the old address.

13. The system of claim 12, wherein the database is associated with a Sponsor.

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14. The system of claim 12, wherein the clearing house is associated with an online information provider to whom the recipient has previously identified the old address and the new address.

15. A method of providing updated electronic addresses via a centralized clearing house to at least one Sponsor comprising:

receiving, at a clearing house, a new address associated with an old address for a recipient;

5 saving the new address, the old address, and an identification of the recipient in a listing accessible by the clearing house, wherein the listing associates the old address with the new address for the recipient; and

providing the new address to a Sponsor upon receiving a request from the Sponsor for a new address associated with an old address for a recipient;

10 whereupon receiving the new address associated with the old address for the recipient the Sponsor may utilize the new address to provide electronic messages to the recipient.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the clearing house is associated with an online information provider accessible via an Internet connection.

17. A method for registering a change of address for a recipient via an electronic change of address system, comprising:

providing an electronic change of address service at a Network Server;

receiving an old address and a new address from a recipient; and

5 establishing a data record at the Network Server;

whereupon receipt of a request from a Sponsor for a new address for the recipient, the

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Network Server receives from the Sponsor an old address, performs a comparison of the old address from the Sponsor and the old address from the recipient and when a match occurs provides to the Sponsor the new address previously established as a data record at the

10 Network Server.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the step of receiving an old address and a new address from a recipient further comprises establishing a data entry field on a Sponsor web site associated with the Sponsor, whereupon entry of the old address and the new address into the data entry field, the Sponsor communicates the old address and the new address to the

5 Network Server.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the data entry field on the Sponsor web site further comprises an opt-in selection by which the recipient may opt-in to providing the change of address information to the Network Server.

20. The method of claim 18, wherein the data entry field on the Sponsor web site further comprises a listing of at least two Sponsors from which the recipient may designate at least one Sponsor to receive the old address and the new address from the Network Server.

21. The method of claim 17, wherein the step of receiving an old address and a new address from a recipient further comprises establishing a pop-up window on a recipient's web browser, whereupon entry of the old address and the new address into the pop-up window, the old address and the new address are directly communicated to the Network Server.

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22. The method of claim 21, wherein the pop-up window further comprises a listing of at least two Sponsors from which the recipient may designate at least one Sponsor to receive the old address and the new address from the Network Server.

23. The method of claim 17, further comprising requiring a Sponsor, upon receiving the new address, to query the recipient as to whether the recipient desires to receive new messages from the Sponsor at the new address.

24. The method of claim 17, further comprising:

communicating a message from the Network Server to the recipient via at least one of the old address and the new address; and

receiving a response to the message, wherein the response is generated by the recipient via the new address.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the step of receiving an old address and a new address from a recipient further comprises establishing a data entry field on a Sponsor web site associated with the Sponsor, whereupon entry of the old address and the new address into the data entry field, the Sponsor communicates the old address and the new address to the Network Server.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein the data entry field on the Sponsor web site further comprises an opt-in selection by which the recipient may opt-in to providing the change of address information to the Network Server.

27. The method of claim 25, wherein the data entry field on the Sponsor web site further comprises a listing of at least two Sponsors from which the recipient may designate at least one Sponsor to receive the old address and the new address from the Network Server.

28. The method of claim 24, wherein the response to the message further comprises an indication from the recipient as to whether the recipient desires to utilize a streamlined approach for notifying at least one Sponsor of the new address.

29. The method of claim 24, wherein the response to the message further comprises an indication from the recipient as to whether the recipient desires to utilize a notification approach for notifying at least one Sponsor of the new address.

30. The method of claim 24, wherein the step of receiving an old address and a new address from a recipient further comprises establishing a pop-up window on a recipient's web browser, whereupon entry of the old address and the new address into the pop-up window, the old address and the new address are directly communicated to the Network
5 Server.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein the pop-up window further comprises a listing of at least two Sponsors from which the recipient may designate at least one Sponsor to receive the old address and the new address from the Network Server.

32. The method of claim 24, further comprising requiring a Sponsor, upon receiving the new address, to query the recipient as to whether the recipient desires to receive new messages from the Sponsor at the new address.

33. A method of validating a recipient desires to change an old address to a new address, comprising:

receiving a request to register an old address and a new address associated with a recipient;

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5 sending a message to each of the old address and the new address, wherein the
message notifies the recipient of the change of address request;

receiving a response from the new address of the change request; and

updating a database providing change of address information to at least one

Sponsor;

10 whereupon receipt of a request from a Sponsor for the new address associated with the old
address, the database matches the old address provided by the Sponsor with the old address
associated with the recipient and communicates the new address to the Sponsor.

34. The method of claim 33, further comprising:

awaiting a response from the old address; and

when the response from the old address is not timely received, communicating

a second message to the old address, the second message further informing the recipient of

5 the change of address request.

35. The method of claim 33, further comprising designating a change of address

as an “A” record when a response is received from the recipient via both the old address and the new address and designating the change of address as a “B” record when a response from the old address is not received.

36. The method of claim 33, wherein the old address and the new address are received at an electronic change of address network server.

37. The method of claim 33, wherein the message is communicated to the recipient via at least one mailbox selected from the group consisting of: an e-mail mailbox, a

voice message mailbox, a pager mailbox, an instant message mailbox, a mobile telephone message mailbox, and a cable message mailbox.

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